



*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Thursday, December 8, 2005

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## **FOUR INDICTED IN PRESCRIPTION FORGERY RING FOR FRAUDULENTLY OBTAINING OVER 27,000 PILLS**

TUCSON, Ariz. – Four defendants have been indicted for conducting a prescription forgery ring in Tucson, Ariz. during which they obtained more than 27,000 pills, mostly Percocet and Oxycodone, (schedule II narcotic pain killers) which they later sold for \$3 to \$5 each. The drugs were obtained from over 50 area pharmacies using forged signatures of at least five Tucson area physicians on 175 fraudulent prescriptions. Titus Tyrone Shack, 40; Don Durand Harper, 38; Kimberly Anne Thompson, AKA Kimberly Brown, 36; and Michele Nicole Holloman, 31, all of Tucson, were arrested on Friday and have appeared before a U.S. Magistrate Judge regarding the charges and their detention status.

All four defendants are in custody at this time, some pending appeal of their release by the U.S. Attorney's Office. The arrests and charges are the result of an on-going joint investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Paul K. Charlton, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona, stated that "At its root, this is a case of identity theft. The defendants used the good names of honest physicians and acted as common drug dealers."

"Prescription drug abuse is prevalent amongst all age groups. Criminals such as those arrested in this case are no different than any other drug offender," said Timothy J. Landrum, Special Agent in Charge, DEA, Phoenix. "The collaborative efforts of DEA, FBI and the U.S. Attorney's office once again demonstrate the effectiveness of close partnerships."

Jana Monroe, Special Agent in Charge, FBI, Phoenix added that, "This on-going investigation involves healthcare fraud, identity theft and diverted schedule II narcotics. The continuing success of this investigation is due to our partnership with DEA and the commitment of both agencies to prevent and deter such illegal activity."

The indictment charges that between June 2002 through November 2005 all four defendants conspired to commit the following offenses: possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance by misrepresentation, fraud, forgery, deception and subterfuge; fraud in connection with identification documents and information; and health care fraud.

The forged prescriptions had the purported signatures of at least five Tucson area physicians and also sometimes presented the identification number assigned to the physician by DEA. The DEA identification number permits authorized physicians to legally prescribe medications to patients. It

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was also part of the conspiracy that defendants committed health care fraud by presenting the forged prescriptions in order to obtain insurance co-payments for the drugs.

They four were arraigned today on the indictment and trial is tentatively set for January 29, 2006. A conviction for conspiracy carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the assigned judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The prosecution is being handled by Danny N. Roetzel, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-2283-TUC  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2005-211(Shack, et al.)

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